



# Contribution of the Free to Shine Campaign to ending HIV and AIDS among children in Rwanda



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## Issues

- Global new HIV infections have declined by 18% in the past 7 years, from 2.2 million in 2010 to 1.8 million in 2017. Although this is half the number of new infections compared to the peak in 1996 (3.4 million), the decline is not enough to reach the target of fewer than 500,000 by 2020.
- In Rwanda, the rate of Mother to Child transmission(MTCT) of HIV has dramatically reduced to 1.5% by 18 months post-partum.

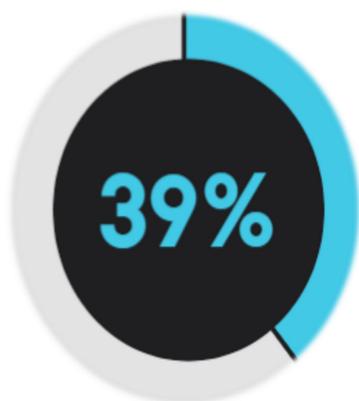


- In 2016, 43% of HIV-exposed infants were tested within the first two months of life. Similarly, 43% of the 2.1 million children living with HIV around the world received antiretroviral therapy (ART). Without timely treatment, mortality in children with HIV is very high.

- Aim: To contribute to ending HIV/AIDS in children and identifying the remaining 57% of children(1.2million) who are not on treatment.
- Imbuto Foundation (IF) through an initiative of the Organizations of African First Ladies against HIV and AIDS in Africa(OAFLA)" the Free to shine campaign", partnered with the Ministry of health, to conduct a screening of all children born from HIV positive parents.

## Description

- IF whose primary goal is to reduce mother to child transmission, contributed to this campaign by partnering with all health centers in Nyabihu district to screen all children born from HIV positive parents, and link them to treatment.
- The screening campaign was conducted across 16 health facilities in Nyabihu district.
- % of clients whose children aged between 0-19 years old.



- The district had 4,181 clients on ART and pre-ART , and 1,632 clients reporting to have children aged between 0-19 years old.

### Data collection

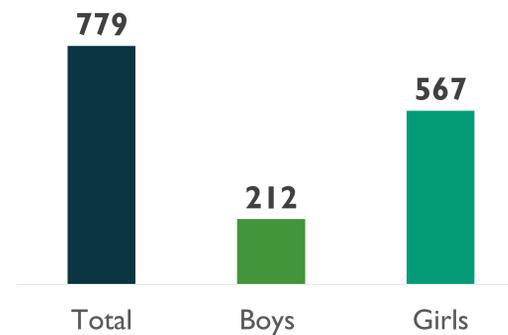
Data of screened children was collected from health centers.

### Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using SPSS version 23.

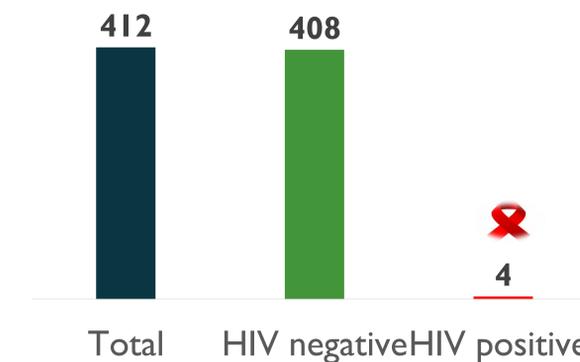
## Lessons Learned

- Number of the children disaggregated by gender, who were not previously screened and tested for HIV.



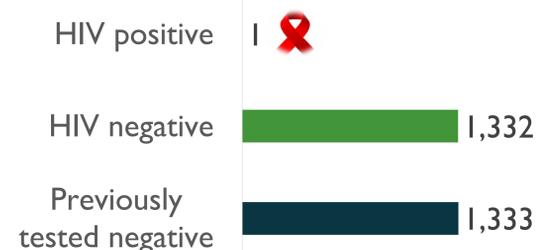
- Before the screening, there was 779 children that were not previously tested. Among them, 212 (27.2%) were boys and 567 (72.8%) were girls.

- HIV status of the children who were tested during the screening campaign.



- Of the 412 children who were tested for HIV/AIDS during the screening campaign, 408 (99%) were HIV negative and 4 (1%) HIV positive.

- HIV status of children who were previously tested for HIV



- 1,333 children that were previously tested negative, were also screened again, and among them 1 child was found positive.



All 5 children who were tested positive, were linked to access treatment.

## Next Steps

- This screening showed that despite the progress made in Rwanda, there is still a large number of children not tested because their parents are not yet comfortable with their HIV status.
- Parents should be sensitized and counselled to screen their children at an early age to prevent HIV transmission. IF will continue to encourage parents to screen their children and therefore contribute to the Rwandan 95-95-95 strategy to end the AIDS epidemic.

- Key words:** Free to Shine Campaign , HIV /AIDS, ART, Children.

- For more information:** [www.imbutofoundation.org](http://www.imbutofoundation.org)

